Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, an apex co-ordinative and enforcement agency, viz. the Narcotics Control Bureau was created and was strengthened subsequently. The Narcotics Control Bureau has established effective co-ordination with all the Central and State enforcement agencies/departments.

(iv) Narcotics cells have been created in the Customs and Central Excise Collectorates and some Police Organisations.

(v) Close liaison is maintained with international agencies like International Criminal Police Organisation (ICPO-INTERPOL), International Narcotics Control Board, Customs Co-operation Council, United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Colombo Plan Bureau, etc.

(vi) Agreements on the matter were signed with countries like Afghanistan, Mauritius, Pakistan and the United States of America.

(vii) A regional convention viz., SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was signed by India in November, 1990, and

(viii) India has acceded to the 1988 U. N. Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Supply of Hank Yarn to Handloom Weavers

*544. SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the steep increase in the price of hank yarn has adversely affected the handloom weavers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to provide hank yarn to the handloom weavers at concessional rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The weighted average prices of hank yarn have risen from Rs. 54.01 per kg to Rs. 57.11 per kg in Coimbatore market from 3-8-1991 to 17-8-1991. The trend of rise in prices continues to be in counts of 10s, 20s, 30s and 40s which are in heavier demand in the handloom sector. Prices for these counts in Coimbatore market as on 3-8-1991 and as on 17-8-1991 are given in the table below:—

Counts	Cotton Hank Yarn Coimbatore Market	
	3-8-1991	17-8-1991
10s	36.73	39.48
20s	49.00	52.08
30s	56.33	59.53
40s/42s	59.77	64.11

(c) Central Government have arrangements of standing nature to ensure the regular supply of hank yarn to the handloom weavers at reasonable prices through various measures, such as (i) The Hank Yarn

Obligation Scheme which requires every producer of yarn to pack at least 50% of the total yarn packed for civil consumption in hank form; (ii) Loan assistance through National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) for setting up of new Weavers' Cooperative Spinning Mills and expanding the capacity of existing weavers' cooperative spinning mills in order to augment production for the handloom sector; (iii) Setting up of the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) with the primary objective of supplying hank yarn to weavers at reasonable prices; (iv) Constitution of State Level Yarn Price Fixation Committees to regulate selling prices of hank yarn produced by cooperative and State sector mills for supplies to the handloom weavers: and (v) Complete exemption of excise duty on double cross reel hank yarn in order to make available yarn to handloom weavers at reasonable prices.

In the wake of recent spurt in yarn prices, Central Government convened a meeting of major representative bodies of spinning industry in the country to impress upon them the need to follow moderation and maintain stability in prices of yarn. Chief Ministers of States have been requested to monitor the production of yarn by cooperative/State sector mills, and to hold regular State level reviews at the level of Secretary in charge of Textiles regarding supply, prices and distribution of hank yarn. Chief Ministers have also been advised to impress of the District Collectors to organise regular checking of the stocks and selling prices of yarn dealers in the districts with a view to preventing hoarding of yarn. Central Government on its part has issued directions to National Textile Corporation (NTC) to augment production of yarn of counts of 40s and below where the price rise has affected the handloom weavers the most. Government of India has also decided to review the export of cotton yarn even though it is of vital interest for maintaining balance of payment position. National Handloom Development Corporation has been directed to step up its yarn supply operations to handloom weavers and agencies in the States. Directions have been issued to Textile Commissioner to initiate checking of yarn dealers with a view to activate dehoarding operations.

Safety Measures to minimise Road Accidents

*545. SHRI M. R. KADAMBUR JANARTHANAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any safety measures to minimise road accidents;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the main causes of road accidents on National Highways; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to develop National Highways ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has taken following measures to minimise the accidents :—

(i) Continuous improvements on the National Highways, by way of better geometrics, provision